

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK FLASH

INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 248563

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (LINE OMITTED PARA 6)

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:PFOR, MO, US, UN, SP, SS

SUBJECT: SPANISH SAHARA

TUNIS EYES ONLY FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON

1. WE REGRET SPANIARDS HAVE INSISTED ON IMMEDIATE MEETING
OF SC ON THIS SUBJECT SINCE WE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED MORE
TIME TO EXHAUST ALL POSSIBLE DIPLOMATIC AVENUES FOR
DEFUSING THE SITUATION PRIOR TO OPEN DEBATE IN COUNCIL,
WHICH IS CERTAIN TO SET OFF AN ADVERSARY RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE PARTIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED.

2. WE ASSUME THAT WALDHEIM IS ALREADY URGING THE PARTIES
TO DEMONSTRATE MAXIMUM RESTRAINT AND TAKE NO ACTION LIKELY
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TO EXACERBATE THE SITUATION. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE WALDHEIM

PLAYING AS ACTIVE A ROLE AS POSSIBLE IN PROMOTING PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT PROCESS IN CONJUNCTION WITH WHATEVER ACTION INITIATED BY SC. FYI: ATHERTON WILL BE VISITING RABAT AS SECRETARY'S EMISSARY. VISIT ALREADY SCHEDULED IN CONTEXT OF LONG PLANNED NORTH AFRICAN TRIP. HE WILL BE SEEING KING ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, AND WILL URGE THAT EVERY POSSIBILITY BE EXPLORED TO AVOID A SITUATION OF DIPLOMATIC OR MILITARY CONFRONTATION. END FYI.

3. WHILE WE ARE PREPARED TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE BEHIND THE SCENES, OUR BASIC POSITION IS ONE OF NEUTRALITY. WE OF COURSE PREFER TO AVOID, IF POSSIBLE, BEING FORCED TO TAKE PUBLIC POSITIONS ON THE MERITS OF THE CASE.

4. AT OCTOBER 20 SC MEETING, YOU SHOULD SUPPORT ADOPTION OF AGENDA IN KEEPING WITH OUR LIBERAL TRADITION OF ACCEPTING DEBATE ON ANY RELEVANT SUBJECT WITHIN SC COMPETENCE. YOU SHOULD ALSO QUIETLY ENCOURAGE IDEA THAT PRINCIPAL FOCUS OF CONSULTATION SHOULD BE ON THE PARTIES IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, TO SEE WHETHER A CONSENSUS BETWEEN THEM CAN BE ACHIEVED.

5. AS FIRST AND MOST URGENT STEP IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE IF SC PRES WERE TO BE AUTHORIZED BY SC MEMBERS TO ISSUE IMMEDIATE APPEAL TO ALL PARTIES TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT AND DO NOTHING WHICH WOULD IMPEDE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE PROBLEM. SIMULTANEOUS WITH THE ABOVE ACTION, OR POSSIBLY IN A SECOND PHASE, CREATION BY SC OF VISITING MISSION, AS DEPINES ADVOCATES, STRPJS US AS ATTRACTIVE POSSIBILITY. IT IMMEDIATELY ENGAGES UN IN A DIPLOMATIC TIME-BUYING EFFORT AND OPENS THE DOOR TO FOLLOW-UP ACTION BY SYG OR SC. NATURALLY WE WOULD NOT WISH TO BE COMMITTED TO ANY SPECIFIC PROPOSITION UNTIL SEEING THE TEXT OF A RESOLUTION, BUT YOU MAY INDICATE IN INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT, WITHOUT TAKING A LEAD, THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF SUCH A MISSION WOULD APPEAR TO US TO BE A REASONABLE PROPOSITION DEPENDING ON TERMS OF REFERENCE AND COMPOSITION. YOU SHOULD ENCOURAGE WALDHEIM TO GET INVOLVED PROMPTLY TO THIS END.

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6. SC SHOULD, IN CONSIDERING TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR SUCH A VISITING MISSION, STRIKE CAREFUL BALANCE BETWEEN VIEWS OF THE VARIOUS PARTIES, AND BETWEEN (A) NEED TO COPE WITH SHORT-TERM SITUATION SPANISH ARE CALLING ATTENTION TO, AND (B) NEED TO AVOID EXCESSIVE CONCENTRATION ON THIS SITUATION AND TO BEGIN FOCUSING ON POSSIBLE LONGER-TERM DIPLOMATIC SOLUTIONS. SUCH TERMS OF REFERENCE, WHILE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT SPANISH VIEWS ON NEED IN SHORTTERM

TO ESTABLISH WHETHER OR NOT THERE EXISTS THREAT TO PEACE
AND NEED IN LONGER TERM FOR SOME ACT OF SELF DETERMINATION
ARE LIKELY TO HAVE TO GIVE RECOGNITION TO MOROCCAN
AND MAURITANIAN VIEWS ON THOSE HISTORICAL TIES WHICH BASIS
OF THEIR CLAIM. BOTH POSITIONS HAVE BEEN GIVEN RECOGNITION
IN ICJ DECISION AND RECENT VISITING MISSION REPORT.

7. FOREGOING PROPOSAL COULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY SC REQUEST
TO SYG TO USE HIS BEST OFFICES WITH THE PARTIES TO PROMOTE
A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT.

8. YOU SHOULD SEE WALDHEIM AND URGE THAT IN ADDITION TO
COUNSELING RESTRAINT HE CONSIDER LENDING HIS GOOD OFFICES
TO THE PARTIES TO ENCOURAGE DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO SOLVE
THE PROBLEM PEACEFULLY, WHETHER OR NOT SC FORMALLY ASKS
HIM TO DO SO. END TEXT. INGERSOLL

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